

MINUTES AND REPORT

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MEETING OF COUNCIL

CO-OPERATIVE FEDERATION OF VICTORIA

held at 225 Swanston Street, Melbourne on Monday, 21st March 1983, commencing
at 4 p.m.

1. PRESENT

Mr. J. N. Black
Mr. E. J. Long
Mr. B. H. Macintosh
Mr. J. Mitchell
Mr. M. Rundle
Mr. G. J. Simms
Mr. O. J. Slattery
Mr. W. W. Rawlinson

Chairman

Executive Officer

In attendance

Mr. B. Greer

Employment Co-operative Development
Programme Business Adviser

Apologies for absence received from

Mr. A. Dash, Mr. A. Gill, Ms. A. Philipp, Mr. J. Rigby

2. MINUTES

Minutes of the meeting held 21st February 1983, having been circulated, were confirmed as a correct record and were adopted.

3. MATTERS ARISING

3.i Directors' Manuals - Minute 3.i

Advice received from the Co-operative Federation of New South Wales that the policy of that Federation is not to develop and issue Manuals for Directors as more emphasis is given to practical training and education for Directors.

Council noted this advice and agreed to defer action on production of Directors' Manuals until firmer policy has been developed with regard to Director training programmes in Victoria.

3.ii Industrial Democracy Publication - Minute 3.iii

Copies of the publication having been issued to each member of Council it was agreed

Copies would be made available in the Federation library for reference by any interested engineer. Members to be so advised.

3.iii Co-operative Insurance Company Membership - Minute 4.iv

A submission, agreed with Co-operative Insurance Company, has been made to the Registrar seeking his authority to admit into membership of Co-operative Federation of Victoria Ltd.

3.iv H.I.O.V. proposal re Bushfire Relief - Minute 10

No further action is proposed by H.I.O.V. in this matter.

4. CORRESPONDENCE

4.i From Victorian Credit Co-operative Association

- advising Rules currently preclude that body from acquiring shares in Co-operative Federation of Victoria Ltd. A Special General Meeting has been called for 2nd May 1983 to correct this situation.

Council noted this advice.

4.ii From Co-operative Federation of Western Australia

Inviting representation at their 63rd Annual Conference on 21st March and reply extending good wishes and apology for inability of Co-operative Federation of Victoria to be present.

4.iii From Victorian Government Public Bodies Review Committee

- advising of enquiry into Small Business Development Corporation.

Noted by Council.

5. FINANCIAL

Statement of Income and Expenditure from 1.7.82 to 28.2.83 and estimated Balance Sheet as at 28th February 1983 was presented, discussed and received.

Council noted reminders had been sent to listed debtors and directed further follow-up action be taken.

6. INCORPORATION OF THE FEDERATION

Council noted that formal notice of a meeting to elect the first Directors of Co-operative Federation of Victoria Ltd. had been issued on 24th February. To date no nominations received other than from current Councillors. Registrar

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authority to be obtained for election of existing Councillors who are officers of their nominating Co-operative in accordance with Advisory Council ruling.

Council noted that the present arrangement for coverage of the present Executive Officer with a Fidelity Guarantee policy in the name of the Co-operative Federation of Australia is not acceptable to the Registrar. Insurance company requested to transfer name of policy holder to Co-operative Federation of Victoria Ltd.

7. 1983 CONFERENCE

In view of the decisions of the Council of the Co-operative Federation of Australia the arrangements provisionally made for an additional day's programme devoted to national Co-operative affairs is to be cancelled.

8. VICTORIAN TRADING CO-OPERATIVE ASSOCIATION

A report from the Executive Officer, of a meeting between representatives of Bendigo Trading Co-operative, Jillong Wholefoods Co-operative, Ballarat Trading Co-operative, was received. Council agreed

that subject to the concurrence of the Board of the Victorian Trading Co-operative Association, these three Co-operatives should be encouraged to become members of that Association for co-ordination of their common objectives.

Should the Board of Victorian Trading Co-operatives Association consider desirable the secretariat and administration of its affairs could be transferred to the Co-operative Federation of Victoria.

9. REPORTS

9.i

Community Employment Co-operative Development Programme

(a) The Review of Participation and involvement of the Co-operative Federation of Victoria in the Victorian Government's Community Employment Co-operative Development Programme supported by a report from the Programme's Business Adviser as submitted to the Minister for Employment and Training on 7th March 1983 was tabled.

(b)

Mr. Greer reported Co-operatives in the Programme met on 7th March and agreed on the desirability of a separate unit being established to embrace the Business Advisory Service and the Education and Training Unit which would seek affiliation with the Co-operative Federation of Victoria and administer Government Funds provided for the services. The type of structure to be adopted by this proposed unit, i.e. Co-operative, public, private company has not been agreed. No indication has been received from Government that this proposal would be acceptable to the Ministry.

Council directed

(b)

A paper be prepared for circulation to Councillors for study to be considered at its next meeting outlining formal proposals of the Co-operatives in the Programme and the effect of changes on the Co-operative Federation of Victoria relating to funding, office accommodation, staff resources of both alternatives, i.e.

- (i) *Combining the services of the B.A. Unit and the E. & T. Unit within the present system in the Co-operative Federation.*
- (ii) *Establishing a separate unit away from the Co-operative Federation but affiliated to it.*

Co-operative Societies Advisory Council

9.ii

Council received a copy of a submission made to the Advisory Council by the Executive Officer on the subject of promotion of understanding of co-operative philosophy.

Mr. Long reported he and Mr. Rawlinson had attended a meeting of the Council on 10th March 1983. In the absence of two members of the Council discussion on the submission from the Executive Officer was deferred to the April meeting.

Amendments to the Co-operation Act 1981 originally indicated to go to Parliament in the 1983 Autumn session are being given detailed study by the Minister's Legislative Review Committee and are not now likely to reach Parliament in its current session.

9.iii

Co-operative Federation of Australia

- (a) The Chairman reported on a meeting of the Council of C.F.A. held in Melbourne on 17th March 1983. That Council resolved to extend the agreement with the Co-operative Federation of Victoria until 30th June 1983 and to terminate it on that date. It also resolved that the proposed re-structuring of that Federation under consideration from May 1981 should not proceed.

Further, it resolved that, due to its inability to fund its limited financial obligations, the services of the Executive Officer be terminated at 30th June 1983.

The Co-operative Federations of New South Wales and Victoria were each asked to submit proposals for operating a Federal Secretariat on a minimal cost basis with provision for continuing membership of the International Co-operative Alliance and the International Raiffeisen Union.

Council agreed to consider the effect of these decisions under the heading 'Future of the Co-operative Federation of Victoria'.

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- (b) Mr. Slattery, as Chairman of a C.F.A. Steering Committee considering the proposition of establishment of a Co-operative Bank, reported on that item.

In view of lack of support for involvement in the proposal by Credit Unions and Permanent Building Societies the tripartite approach was not to be further pursued.

C.F.A. Council considered an alternative verbal proposal from the Co-operative Federation of New South Wales based on the United States of America National Consumer Co-operative Bank replacing the Government input with funding from an overseas Co-operative Bank. A nominee of the Co-operative Federation of Australia will join the N.S.W. study team to pursue investigations of the proposal.

9.iv Executive Officer

Mr. Rawlinson reported he had visited Geelong for discussions with Jilllong Wholefoods Co-operative, had met with groups interested in forming a Co-operative for (1) Philharmonic musical activity (2) market gardening in Monbulk. He had discussions with representatives of three South Gippsland Herd Improvement Associations on re-structuring proposals of Herd Improvement Organisation of Victoria. He will be part of a selection committee interviewing applicants for the position of Researcher into development of Co-operatives in Schools project. He has been invited to prepare a paper on Co-operatives for publication in Victorian Producers Co-operative House journal. He has been invited to present a paper to a Directors' Management Seminar organised by the Victorian Dairy Processing Industry Training Committee.

10. FUTURE OF THE CO-OPERATIVE FEDERATION OF VICTORIA

At the outset Council agreed unanimously that in its present stage of development the Co-operative Federation of Victoria cannot afford to reduce its services to members, the State Government and the public. However, the present income of the Federation is insufficient to meet the costs of a full professional service.

It was agreed

- (i) that affiliation with the Co-operative Federation of Australia should be continued at a maximum subscription rate of \$2,000 per annum conditional upon that body maintaining its agreed international co-operative affiliations;
- (ii) that the Co-operative Federation of Victoria could not continue to provide secretarial services for the Co-operative Federation of Australia but would support the transference of the secretariat to operate on a minimal cost basis in Western Australia;
- (iii) that a committee, initially comprising Messrs. Macintosh and Simm be forthwith established to study income generating opportunities of commercial benefit to the Federation, initially, in the Gippsland District;

(iv)

that a committee comprising Messrs Long and Slattery study and submit recommendations to Council on budget proposals for operation the Federation without the federal subsidy received in the past;

(v)

that the matters contained in Minute 9(iii) above and 10 be classified confidential restricted to circulation and discussion amongst members of Council until positive proposals have been finalised.

11. NEXT MEETING

The next meeting was scheduled for Monday, 18th April 1983 commencing after the special meeting for election of directors of Co-operative Federation of Victoria Ltd. scheduled for 4 p.m.

12. CLOSURE

There being no further business the meeting was closed at 8.25 p.m.

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2. MINUTES

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